



Megaports Initiative

Protecting the world's shipping network from dangerous cargo and nuclear materials

Ninety percent of the world's trade occurs via container cargo shipped in and out of seaports. If left unprotected, the world's largest and busiest seaports could be used by terrorists to smuggle or traffic nuclear material.

It is important to the security of the United States and the rest of the world that cargo shipped through seaports is screened for hazardous materials that could be used to make a "dirty bomb," or even worse, a nuclear weapon.

Working together with other countries to inspect the cargo *before* it enters a U.S. port is critical to keeping America safe from a nuclear terrorist attack.



NNSA's Megaports Initiative, which began in 2003, teams up with other countries to enhance their ability to screen cargo at major international seaports. The Initiative provides radiation detection equipment and trains their personnel to specifically check for nuclear or other radioactive materials. In return, NNSA requires that data be shared on detections and seizures of nuclear or radiological material that resulted from the use of the equipment provided.

The Megaports Initiative has three main objectives:

- **Deterring** terrorists from using the world's seaports to ship illicit materials;
- **Detecting** nuclear or radioactive materials if it shipped via sea cargo; and
- **Interdicting** harmful material before it is used against the U.S. or one of our allies.

In cooperation with foreign governments, Megaports representatives determine the most effective placement of radiation equipment for each seaport. Installed sensors then screen cargo containers for special nuclear or other radioactive materials. If anything is detected, the sensors alert foreign port officials of the need to further examine the cargo so they can take appropriate action.



Because the world's economy relies on the global shipping network, it is crucial that these security inspections are not only safe and reliable, but are conducted efficiently. Megaports systems are designed to have minimal impact on critical port operations.

The Megaports Initiative works closely with the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Customs and Border Protection Container Security Initiative. Together NNSA and the Department of Homeland Security engage other countries to help secure the international maritime trade lanes

The Megaports Initiative is currently operational in Greece, Bahamas, Sri Lanka and the Netherlands. NNSA is at various stages of implementing the Megaports program in 10 other countries: Belgium, China, Dubai, Honduras, Israel, Oman, the Philippines, Singapore, Spain and Thailand.

In an effort to expand cooperation, the Megaports team is engaged in negotiations with approximately 20 additional countries in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and South America.